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SCULPTURE IN THE FINE ARTS EXHIBIT AT THE PAN-AMERICAN

THE sculpture exhibit, as distinguished from the sculpture made for the temporary purpose of decorating the Exposition, is situated partly in the Fine Arts Building and partly in certain spots about the grounds.

Unquestionably the grandest example is the "General Sherman," by Augustus Saint Gaudens, which fronts the Fine Arts Building and has for background the lake and wooded slopes of Buffalo Park. The General leans a little forward in the saddle, reining in the neck of his big-boned, powerful charger. His head is bare, his military cloak floating behind in large folds, while in front of his left stirrup moves a figure of Victory, palm branch in hand. Her drapery is buoyed up with air as she advances, the horse's tail streams behind; throughout the whole group is a single impulse of irresistible advance. Seen from any point of view the mass is compact with dignity and beautifully decorative in outline and bulk, having the first requisite of a monumental group—an arresting and fascinating silhouette. At closer range the conception is equally admirable. First of all, it is so big in its simplicity; no labor has been wasted on trivialities, every feature is ample and significant. And then for characterization—the horse in build and gait is a serviceable creature, bred for endurance and courage; the man is self-centred, with indomitable purpose in his face and bearing, while the woman's figure equally expresses grace and confidence, and her ex-

pression is one of lofty enthusiasm mingled with sadness. The group was exhibited at the Paris Exposition, where, among a few examples of the best modern French sculptors, it sounded its own individual note of character and feeling. It is probably the finest achievement so far of Mr. Saint Gaudens's genius, and represents the highest point to which American sculpture has yet attained, differing from the ordinary equestrian statue in being a work of the imagination. It is not only a personal memorial of the General, but an epitome of the qualities which made him great and of the principles that inspired him. Moreover, judged from the technical standpoint, it presents that ornamental grandeur of mass which makes it beautiful, irrespective of the theme it commemorates. Its ultimate destination in the bronze is Central Park, New York.

Mr. Saint Gaudens is also represented by copies of the "Shaw Memorial" and the "Angel with Tablet" and the "Robert Louis Stevenson Memorial." The last, executed for Edinburgh, Scotland, is a bas-relief, with a life-sized figure of the author reclining on a couch. His body is in a seated attitude, supported with pillows, and his legs, covered with a rug and drawn up at the knees, form a mass with undulating outline. The expression of the head is sensitively refined, with a touch of tender sadness and a predominance of alert intellectuality; and the hands, one of which holds a note-book, the other a pencil, with fingers long and delicately modeled, echo the sensibility of the face. The same feeling, indeed, is reproduced throughout the composi-

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tion by the suave elegance of the lines and tender differences of plane, while the large simplicity of the spacing maintains an effect of high-bred distinction. In a decorative way it is admirable, and the conception interprets very completely some phases of Stevenson's complex personality. But scarcely all, for it yields no hint of his exquisite humor and very little, if any, of the persistent courage that was one of his noblest characteristics. There is, perhaps, too much emphasis laid upon the physical frailty, to the exclusion of the will-power which enabled him to surmount its limitations. The representation is so fascinating that one should clearly realize its shortcomings.

Equally there is a feature of excellence that should be particularly noted: the skill with which Mr. Saint Gaudens makes his figure a part of the background, growing out of it and melting into it, so that the whole of the enclosed space is a *parterre* of beautiful forms, of which the figure is the most attractive. I spoke of "skill," but no mere cleverness of hand or knowledge of the principles of low-relief will attain this result, which is primarily the product of imagination and feeling. The sculptor who has not these qualities in a marked degree cannot succeed in this branch of his art, for it betrays his deficiencies at once, which, no doubt, is the reason that one sees so few acceptable examples. Most of them are nothing more than a section of the figure stuck upon a background to which it has no organic relation; or, if the relief is high, they are little else but a pictorial composition, executed under great disadvantages—inadequately realistic instead of being suggestively abstract.

None of our sculptors has had a greater vogue than Frederick MacMonnies, who for many years has pitched his studio in Paris. His strong point is technical facility; the skill with which he can reproduce the delicate modulations of the form and the spirit which he gives to the movement; qualities which are estimated very highly by the French and represent the highest to which the majority of

them aspire and which few reach with the assurance and frequency that Mr. MacMonnies does. As long as he practises this facility on little subjects of elegant inventiveness, as the "Boy and Duck," he is very charming. So also, in a more ambitious work, like the "Bacchante," though I question whether we do not get very tired of the latter; its extreme agility and empty *simper* of expression. The creature is entirely mindless, and not with the unconsciousness of having soul or mind, as in the faun, or with the real *insouciance* of the pagan irresponsibility, but with the reckless *abandon* of one who has flung off her consciousness with her clothes and is "going it for all it is worth." The oftener one sees the statue, the more justifiable seems its rejection from the Boston Library.

When, however, Mr. MacMonnies undertakes subjects which demand mind in the author and an expression of it in themselves, his deficiencies are more obvious. His statues of Sir Harry Vane and Shakespeare are empty of personality and have little more than merely technical excellence; in the latter a clever rendering of the costume and in the "Vane" an agreeable elegance of movement in the carriage of the body and the disposition of the hands. But fancy summing up the characterization of Sir Harry as an elegant gentleman, intent upon the buttoning of his glove! But the composition, as a mass, is distinctly decorative, which reminds one of another of this sculptor's limitations.

So long as the composition consists of only one figure it is generally agreeable, but in grouping he displays little art or instinct for beauty. Even so small a piece as his "Venus and Adonis" is commonplace, while ambitious ones, like the high-relief groups for the front of the Brooklyn Arch, are simply chaotic. They are meant to symbolize War, but give the impression of an infuriated mob, indiscriminately aggressive, very different from the phalanx of concerted movement in response to one great impulse, as in the groups upon the Arc de l'Etoile, from which these were evidently borrowed. And how utterly they are lacking in any dignity or elevation of feeling, the culminating affront to reason and good taste being the nude Victory at the top, which represents naturalism of the grossest kind. Moreover, the figures in these later works are

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individually less skillfully done than his earlier ones, showing signs of having been thrown up hastily and with little study; characteristics which may be noted in the tame model of an equestrian statue of General Slocum which is to be placed in Brooklyn.

One has dwelt at some length upon the work of Mr. MacMonnies because his name is often coupled with that of Mr. Saint Gaudens, and the two are unquestionably our leading sculptors. Yet in their art they are antipodal; representing, respectively, imagination and fancy, depth and shallowness, glib facility and a labor towards expression that reaches slowly and painfully for perfection. The one is a genius, the other, except for his remarkable technique, a very ordinary person. Fortunately for the development of American art, Mr. Saint Gaudens lives most of his life in this country, so that his influence upon other sculptors has been the more immediate.

Our sculptors receive very little encouragement from the American public in any other branch of their art than that of portrait busts and statues. For works of the imagination there is but little demand, which is unfortunate, since it deprives many sculptors of what would be a most congenial field, and, at the same time, retards the development of the art. George Gray Barnard, however, had the luck to obtain a commission from the late Mr. Alfred Corning Clark which resulted in the large bronze statue of "Pan" that is to be placed in Central Park. In some leafy recess of that enchanting reproduction inside a great city of the artless beauty of nature it will rest congenially, for it embodies, in this huge-limbed, supple, languorous, goat-legged creature, that is blowing music from a reed, the old idea of the kinship between man and nature, upon which time has little improved. It represents that estimable kind of animalism that finds pleasure in the mere joy of living, a quality that in all ages except the Golden one has been pretty scarce, and in this one of organized everything, perhaps, is more than ever so. Mr. Barnard's group of a prostrate youth, with another standing over him—"Two Natures"—is also here; very interesting in its involved composition and full of powerfully controlled action, but in its symbolism it may seem rather hard to fathom. Which is the good and which the bad? Per-

haps the vagueness is intentional, for Mr. Barnard's mind is given to abstractions, and it is the *idea* of conflict rather than any concrete phase of it that he is seeking to express.

Another whose bent inclines to symbolism is Charles Grafly, who shows on this occasion "Vulture of War," "Symbol of Life" and "From Generation to Generation." The first is by far the best and for the reason that its conception is more abstract than in the others and is not helped out by symbolic objects. The Vulture is not a bird, but a man; crouching forward as he descends from a rock to glut his lust; the incarnation of cruel force. In the "Symbol of Life" there is a woman with a globe and wheat ear and a man with a scythe, both nude. It is, by comparison with the other, a literary presentment, and the text is obscure. "From Generation to Generation" represents a youth setting forth towards his career, wistful and eager, and an old man tottering beside him with drooping head and unpleasantly shrunken figure, while behind them is a sort of horoscopolical device. It is too obviously concrete in its presentment.

There is a very interesting group of younger sculptors who have sought their motives far afield from the complexities of civilization, some amongst the Indians, and one of them, A. Phimister Proctor, in the wild animals of the Northwest. He has studied them with the deliberation of a trapper, following them to their haunts and watching them from his solitary encampment. His work is more than structurally accurate; it reveals the native freedom of movement and the habitual character of the animal. Cyrus E. Dallin shows an equestrian statue, full size, the "Medicine Man"; horse and rider, lithe and sinewy, and the latter very effective in his alert self-possession. Conspicuously interesting are a number of Western studies by Solon H. Borglum. Such titles as "Lassoing Wild Horses," "Buried on the Plains," "Snow Drift," and "On the Border of the White Man's Land," will suggest the scope of his subjects. But his distinguishing characteristic is a faculty of imagination which sees the fact in relation to its immense surroundings and can bring out its latent significance; pathos, stern reality or poetry, as the case may be. Thus, in "Snow Drift," he has represented in marble a mare caught in a storm and sheltering her

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foal. Not only does it awaken pity, but admiration for the masterly simplicity with which the conception has been realized. The modelling is so suggested by the medium that the group seems to have grown out of the marble. His method of modelling is always very individual; most impressionistic, giving only the important facts, but avoiding the crudeness that impressionistic sculpture sometimes shows. This absence of triviality and reliance upon the significant features give these diminutive statuettes a very big character. "On the Borders of the White Man's Land" represents an Indian lying upon his stomach on the ground, peering through the arch made by his horse's neck and head, the mane falling over the opening like a curtain. You have the entire accord between man and beast, a suggestion of the Indian character and his relation to the white man, and, more than these, though a written description will not convey the idea, a feeling of the loneliness and vastness of the prairies. In fact, it is imaginative work of a high order, and puts Mr. Borglum among the foremost of our sculptors. Less original, but full of character, are "The Sun Vow" and "The Moqui Runner," by H. A. MacNeil, and the later subject reminds one of an excursion into this *genre* made by Paul W. Bartlett. He sends a half life-size figure of an "Indian Dancer," which very truthfully represents the measured ecstasy (if you may so call it) of the man's mind and the peculiar lolling movement as the body poises on each step. But Mr. Bartlett's finest exhibit is a copy of the "Michael Angelo," the original of which is in the Library of Congress, a work of elevated and sincere imagination.

The "Colonel Thomas Cass" of Richard E. Brooks is a work of much distinction, handsome in mass, easy and resolute in attitude, and, one can believe, a good character study. John Flanagan sends several details of the clock for the Library of Congress, upon which he is engaged in Paris; and Charles H. Niehaus is represented by his bust of J. Q. A. Ward and that very dignified statue of Hahnemann. Nothing in the whole exhibition is more beautiful than a little "Faun," blowing a double pipe, by Louis Saint Gaudens. With feet close together and back arched far in, the child form is represented with all its delicious softness of flesh and delicately undu-

lating lines; a figure of exquisite purity and unconscious grace. A little group, called "Tired Out," by J. J. Boyle, is another fascinating piece; a mother, baby and older child asleep; she protecting them even in her unconsciousness, they nestling close. It is a subject very charming in its intricate composition and replete with tenderest sentiment of an entirely sane kind.

A group of portrait busts of ladies is shown by Herbert Adams. More than seldom a bust is as uninteresting a thing as you will find in sculpture; obvious, unsuggestive and commonplace; not more artistic than a tin-type. Mr. Adams, however, gives to his work not only an interest, but remarkable fascination. Sometimes he plays with happy technical devices, using tinted marble, wood and gold in combination, as the French have been doing with such marked success. But his busts have a more intrinsic charm, psychological as well as physical. This was a characteristic of the busts by Olin L. Warner, who, by a strange omission, is not represented here. He managed to suggest the spiritual *ego* of the subject, as distinct from a few hints indicative of character; just as, in the presence of a charming woman, we are conscious of a pervasive winningness without any consciousness of her actual character. I find the same kind of charm in these busts by Mr. Adams; an air of refined distinction and persuasive sweetness, the latter not weak but exquisitely womanly.

Daniel C. French sends copies of the two figures of "Painting" and "Sculpture," executed for the Hunt Memorial in New York, but his most important exhibit is the equestrian statue of Washington, the original of which stands in the Place d'Iéna, in Paris. The horse was modeled by Edward C. Potter, and the collaboration of the two artists has resulted in a representation, severely simple, of dignified reserve and much elevation of feeling.

This summary does not complete the tale of the exhibits, for all were not in place at the opening of the Fine Arts Building, and I have written only of those which it was possible to study.

The impression left upon one's mind by the display as a whole is one of directness, energy, healthfulness and promise for the future.